received regarding the involvement of dummy agents charging illegal commission from the corporation;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) the reasons therefor; and

(g) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Does not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) to (g). Does not arise.

[English]

National Stock Exchange

*259. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL:
SHRI S.B. SIDNAL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to establish a National Stock Exchange;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to become operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) to (c). Government have approved in principle, the establishment of a National Stock Exchange at New Bombay by the Infra-structure Leasing and Financial Services Limited. It is intended that this Exchange would function as a model Exchange and would provide access to investors from various parts of the Country. It is difficult to indicate at this stage the time by which it will become operational since the Exchange is yet to be granted recognition under the provisions of the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956.

Foreign Currency (Non Resident) Account Scheme

*260. SHRI E. AHAMED: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have introduced an changes in the Foreign currency (non-resident) Account Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the increase/decrease in the deposits under the scheme as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b). The Foreign Currency (Non-resident) Account Scheme has been further liberalised in the following manner with a view to makeing it more attractive to NRIs:

1. The amount of loan/overdraft which may be granted by authorised dealers to the FCNR Account holders for purposes otherthan investment in India has been raised from Rs. 5 lakhs to Rs. 10 lakhs.

2. Authorised dealers have been permitted to grant Rupee loans/ overdrafts upto Rs. 10 lakhs to the FCNR Account Holders for purposes of making direct investment on non-repatriation basis in the capital of Indian firms/companies engaged in approved activities. Hitherto, clearance of RBI was required for this purpose.

3. Authorised dealers have been permitted to grant loan/overdraft facilities to resident individual/firms/companies in India against collateral of fixed deposits held in FCNR Accounts subject to certain condition without reference to the RBI.

4. Loans granted to Account holders themselves against their FCNR deposits can now be repaid from Rupee funds held in their Non-Resident Ordinary Account subject to the condition that interest payable on such loans would be commercial rates.

(c) The position of outstanding balance under the FCNR Scheme is given below month-wise from August, 1991:-

Month	*Rs. in crores*
August, 1991	14838
Sept., 1991	14455
Oct., 1991	14144
Nov., 1991	14071
Dec., 1991	14263
Jan., 1992	14173

Newsprint Import

*261. SHRI BHAGEY GOBARDHAN:
SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHURY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether any irregularities in the import of newsprint have been detected recently as reported in the Times of India dated February 9, 1992;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the estimated loss suffered by the government;

(d) whether the Government have investigated or propose to investigate the alleged irregularities;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to check recurrence of such irregularities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (f). Government have noted the Newspaper report in the Times of India dated 9.2.92. The facts in the matter are as follows:

i) STC purchased 9000 MTs of glazed newsprint from FINNPAP in October, 1991 at a FOB rate of $ 609 PMT with option to purchase an additional quantity of 5000 MTs.

ii) On 30.12.1991, S.T.C. decided to exercise the option for purchase of this additional quantity of 5000 MTs from FINNPAP at the FOB rate of $ 609 PMT.

iii) On the basis of a complaint received in January, 1992 that the international price was lower than $ 609 PMT FOB, the STC had advised the supplier FINNPAP not to go ahead with the production till such time they hear from STC in the matter.

iv) S.T.C. is now seeking legal opinion before cancelling the contract for